

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An article for generating contract documents in a recurring contracting environment, the article comprising a tangible machine-readable storage medium embodying instructions that when performed by one or more processors result in operations, the instructions defining comprising software modules comprising:

contract storage that maintains information relating to a previous contract that has been entered into;

a bid invitation generator associated with a buyer and adapted to convert the information relating to a previous contract obtained from a contract data store into basic bid invitation information, and to provide supplemental bid invitation information in the form of a bid invitation, the supplemental bid information including evaluation rules for scoring each bid;

an interface that provides the bid invitation to one or more designated bidders at a plurality of remote computer systems and receives responsive bids from one or more of the remote computer systems from the designated bidders;

a bid aggregator configured to automatically score the bids according to a predetermined scoring standard based on the evaluation rules, the predetermined scoring standard assigning a relative importance to a plurality of terms within the bids;

a second interface that provides a graphical user interface for displaying at least a portion of the scores for the bids and receives user-generated input selecting one of the bids based on its score; and

a contract generator configured to form a new contract based on the information relating to a previous contract and the bid selected via the graphical user interface one of the responsive bids.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the contract generator selects the one of the responsive bids from which the new contract is formed.
4. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 3, wherein a highest scoring bidder according to the predetermined scoring standard is selected for the new contract.
5. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein a bid trigger causes the bid invitation generator to generate a bid invitation upon the occurrence of the pending expiration of a prior contract.
6. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein a bid trigger causes the bid invitation generator to generate a bid invitation upon the meeting of a target quantity on a prior contract.
7. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the contract generator forms a portion of the new contract based on previously agreed upon terms between the buyer and a selected bidder.
8. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the contract generator forms a portion of the new contract based on provisions selected by the buyer during performance of a prior contract.
9. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the bid invitation offers a plurality of selectable provisions associated with a contract clause.
10. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the bid aggregator generates a summary of terms from two or more of the responsive bids.
11. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 10, wherein the interface supervises contracting workflow to allow for approval of the new contract.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 1, wherein the bid invitation is provided in the form of a term sheet.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of generating contracting documents using ~~a~~ an automated computing system, comprising:

receiving, by the automated computing system, a contract renewal indication;

generating, by the automated computing system, a bid invitation in response to the contract renewal indication, the bid invitation including a plurality of offered terms and a plurality of requested terms;

sending, by the computing system, the bid invitation to a plurality of remote computer systems to solicit one or more bid responses;

receiving, by the automated computing system, one or more bid responses from at least a portion of the remote computer systems;

scoring, by the automated computing system, the bid responses according to a predetermined scoring standard, the predetermined scoring standard being generated and stored prior to sending the bid invitation to the plurality of remote systems and assigning a relative importance to a plurality of terms within the bid responses, the bid aggregator normalizing values that are bid for the terms within the bid responses;

displaying scores for at least a portion of the bid responses in a graphical user interface;

receiving user-generated input via the graphical user selecting one of the bid responses;
and

generating, by the automated computing system, a contract by incorporating information from a previous contract and one of the responsive bids the selected bid response.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the contract renewal indication is associated with the expiration of a prior contract.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the contract renewal indication comprises instructions from a user to initiate a new contract.

17-19. (Canceled).

20. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising triggering the generation of a bid invitation upon the occurrence of the pending expiration of a prior contract.

21. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising triggering the generation of a bid invitation upon the meeting of a target quantity on a prior contract.

22. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein a portion of the new contract is formed based on previously agreed upon terms between the buyer and a selected bidder.

23. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein a portion of the new contract is formed based on provisions selected by the buyer during performance of a prior contract.

24. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the bid invitation offers a plurality of selectable provisions associated with a contract clause.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising generating a summary of terms from two or more of the responsive bids.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising supervising contracting workflow to allow for approval of the new contract.

27. (Canceled).

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the bid invitation is provided in the form of a term sheet, the term sheet comprising an abbreviated form of terms in the contract.